

Her Spot in Time

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"Margaret Markenson, walk. That's an order mark," a voice called.

A reddish brown head turned around and saw one of the older girls, a prefect, who were in charge of keeping things from going hay wire. Blowing the hair from her forehead, she continued down the hallway, except she didn't run this time.

Arriving at her classroom, she yanked on the knob and the door opened. The class had already started, and everyone looked at her as she headed towards her desk. Once she was at her desk, the middle aged woman called out,

"You're late."

"I was told to walk, Mrs. Backerwitz" Margaret explained.

"Order mark," Mrs. Backerwitz told to the girl in the front row. "For tardiness."

Margaret stood and watched the girl, looked back at her, flashed her a smug look, and started writing in a little notebook that she carried for those little infractions. Sighing, Margaret sat in her seat and opened her book, so she could be with the rest of class.

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 She had been going to the Markley School for Girls for the last few months, and she was still having troubles there. She hadn't been happy since she returned to London and was immediately, plunked into boarding school. Everything that made her happy was back in the

States. Holding back a sigh, she leaned back in her chair and remembered what her life had been like for the last five years.

It was in 1939 and war was starting in Europe and Asia. Margaret's mother didn't want her to stay there because if she stayed, she took the risk of getting killed or injured. Her mother wasn't going to take that chance. So Margaret was evacuated to the States.

For the past five years, she had been living in a southern part of New Jersey, and it had been wonderful. She had lived with David and Sue Jacobs, and their two kids, Mike and Mary, and they were adventurous. They were always doing something fun, and Margaret loved it.

When she was evacuated, she had been a timid little thing, shy and quiet. It took a while for David and Sue to get her to open up. Then, once she was open, she was like a runaway freight train. She was into everything, trying to learn what she could. There was nothing that she didn't want to learn. One thing she took a liking to was David's printing press. He had one in his garage, an old one.

When he was at work, she loved to run her fingers over the grooves, and feel all the shapes of the letter blocks. They fascinated her, and for some reason she couldn't explain it. Sometimes, before he left for work, he would give her things to do, so she could play with the press. For hours, she'd sit there, pumping the medal pedal, up and down, as she made the press go. The papers shot out as fast as she placed them in the holder. After he came home, she would show him the papers, and he hugged her, and she was full of pride and happiness.

"Margaret Markenson!"

Looking up from her paper, Margaret had a questioning look on her face. Pursing her lips, and wrinkling her forehead, she looked up at the teacher. You could tell that she was worried, yet hateful of the teacher.

"Yes, Mrs. Backerwitz," she said as she stood up from her seat.

Mrs. Backerwitz nodded to the door, and Margaret saw that a prefect was standing in the open doorway. She looked back at her teacher as the teacher started to say,

"You need to go to the office."

She nodded and gathered all her books. Out in the hall, she followed the prefect down the hall and the prefect stopped her in front of the door for the office. Watching the prefect as she walked down the hall, she shook her head and looked back at the door. Raising her hand, she rapped on the door, hearing the deep echo inside the room. A minute later, she heard a voice call out from inside, "Come in."

Gulping, she gripped the handle and turned the knob. Opening the door, she walked in and stood just inside the door, as it closed behind her. She stood there until she was called to come forward. On the other side of the room, a middle age woman with curly, silver

hair and piercing blue eyes, sat behind a dapper looking desk. This was the headmistress, Mrs. Mizkens.

"Come forward," she said as she returned to her desk.

Walking over to the desk, Margaret sat down in the high-backed chair that stood in front of her desk. She sat there until Mrs. Mizkens looked back up again and picked up something from her desk. Handing the letter over to her, she said,

"This just came from your parents."

"My parents?"

"Yes, there seems to be some difficulties at home. You're supposed to stay here this weekend, and the rest of the weekends until I've been given further notice."

Margaret opened the letter and skimmed over the two-page letter, quickly. It seemed like her mother and father were having troubles again. She had noticed that on her last trip home, the previous weekend. It had started when he had come home from his war duty, and it seemed to keep building. Closing the letter, she looked back up Mrs. Mizkens and sat there as she gave her the last of her instructions.

"Since you're going to be staying here, you won't be required to stay with your prefect on Friday. So, instead, you are to stay with your class out in the gardens, while you do your nature study. You may go now."

Margaret nodded, stood up and walked out of the office. She stood there in the office, annoyed. Her weekend trips were one thing that she looked forward to after a long, horrible week. Now she wasn't going to be getting those, at least not for a long while.

Normally, on Fridays, those who left for the weekends were able to leave early from their last class. Now that she wasn't leaving, she had to stay through her entire class. And how she hated her nature study class. She loved being outside, but one thing she abhorred was garden work. It was just not for her.

Balling her hands into fists, she walked swiftly to her next class.

FRIDAY

"Alright, girls. You are to go into the garden, and look for your assigned plant or tree. Find it and study it," Mrs. Backerwitz said to each one with a stern face. As they all walked off, she called after all of them, "And stay with your partners."

They all headed off in different directions. Margaret had been placed with the same girl who had written her up earlier that week, and neither of them were to pleased. Neither of them were friends. Matter of fact, they hated each other. This girl was always looking for something to write Margaret up on. That's why Margaret hated her. The girl hated her because she was from America, period. She knew nothing of her circumstances, just that she had been in America and acted like one.

Staying as far away from each other as they could, but were still with their partners, they headed through the garden, looking for their assigned plant. After searching for ten minutes, they found the plant in the back of the garden, next to two trees that were arched together. They studied their plant, and wrote down the answers to their questions and made their observations. Margaret sat down, on a nearby rock, and wrote down her observations.

Five minutes later, she looked up and her partner was no where in sight. She looked around for a few minutes and still didn't find her. Since she couldn't find her, Margaret decided to go for a small walk. Class wouldn't be over for ten more minutes, and she had plenty of time. Putting her assignment in her pocket, she started walking.

She stopped suddenly because she had heard something. Looking both ways, she couldn't figure out where it was coming from. Finally, she realized that it was coming from the other side of the tree arch. As she got closer, the noises got louder. Making sure no one was around her, she walked through the arc, and completely disappeared from view.

"I'll take your ten, and raise you fifteen," Spot said as he added his money to the already growing pile.

It was a Friday night, and it was poker night at Manhattan. Some of the newsies from Brooklyn decided to come, and they were all playing poker. Spot played, on and off, all night. It was getting to be the last game, and it was getting to be tense. The pot was getting bigger, and all of the players each wanted to win it.

"Alright, boys," Jack said as he added the his bid to the pile. "Time to show your cards."

He looked around the circle, at all his friends who were playing. This was the time he's been waiting for the entire round. The pot was big and he wanted to buy something special with it for Sarah. It had come time for him to ask her the all-important question.

One by one, the newsies laid down their hands, and saw that each person after them had a better hand. Spot was the last person to lay down his cards. He was about to when he was interrupted by a yell. Looking up, he saw someone falling on him and he did the only thing he could think of. He threw up his arms, losing his cards from his hand, so he could brace the fall.

When the person was laying there on him, he saw that it was a girl. He helped her up, and she brushed off her clothes. It was then that they all got a good look at her. She had reddish brown hair, which was in two braids, blue eyes, and she was tall, about Spot's height. What got them most were her clothes. She wore a gray skirt that stopped just short of her knees, a white shirt that was covered by a blue blazer with a yellow shield on the right lapel. At her neck, there was a blue and yellow tie.

She realized that they were staring at her. Smiling, she realized that she was doing the same thing. Holding out her hand to the one she had fell on, she said,

"Hi, my names Margaret Markenson, but you can call me Prints."

"Hi, Prints," Spot said as he shook her hand. He was still looking her up and down, mostly at her clothes. "Why are you wearing those clothes? They look funny."

"Mine look funny? What are you talking about? Yours are the ones that are funny looking. Those clothes are so old fashioned. Do you know that you're wearing clothes that are forty years old."

"Forty years old? What are you talking about girl?" Spot asked, releasing his hand from her grip, and crossing his arms over his chest as he looked at her like she was crazy.

"This is 1944. Those clothes are from the late 1800s."

"This is 1900, after all. I don't think they would be out of fashion, yet," Spot said sarcastically.

"1900?" She asked, wrinkling her forehead in pure confusion. Scratching her head, she mumbled, "How the heck did that happen? How did I get from 1944 England and end up in 1900 New York? Not possible, or is it? Hmmm.."

"You're from England?" Jack asked when he finally got his voice back. He was as stunned as everyone else was. They weren't expecting to have someone fall out of nowhere. "You don't sound like you're from England. Where's your accent?"

"I lost it," she told him.

"Well, I'm sure we can find it," Les called out. Les and his brother had decided to come, since there was no school the next day. Ever since Les had heard about the poker nights, he had been begging to come to one. His mother finally let him, as long as it wasn't on a school night and he went with David.

They all chuckled and she walked over to him. Kneeling down to his level, she asked, "What's your name?"

"Les. I'm seven," he said holding up his fingers to show her.

She heard someone from behind her say, "Don't believe him. He's ten. Jack taught him a little to well. Huh, Jack?"

"You could say that," Jack said as he laughed.

"Well, I'm Prints, and it's nice to meet you," she said as she gently ruffled his hair.

Standing up, she turned to where the voice was and looked in a pair of familiar brown eyes. Wrinkling her eyebrows, she rubbing her chin as she tried to think. Holding out her hand, she said, "Hi, I don't know if you know, but I'm Prints."

"I know. I'm David. David Jacobs," he told her. "Let me introduce you to everyone else."

Walking her around the room, she introduced her to who was there.

When he was done, he finished by saying, "You'll meet the rest of the newsies tomorrow."

She nodded then started rubbing her chin again. Talking out loud, she muttered, "David Jacobs? Where have I heard that name before?"

"Maybe from the newspapers?" Jack asked.

"No, that can't be it. Remember, I'm from 1944 and from England. I don't know how much of the American news gets to England."

"That's right," Jack muttered.

Walking around the room, she stopped long enough to look David over, then she gently slapped her forehead. Saying aloud, "Now I remember."

"What?" They all chimed in.

She walked over to David and asked, "Do you know a woman by the name of Mary Molten? Brown hair, blue eyes, average height."

"Yeah, I've been dating her for the last year. Why?"

Smiling, she walked away, and said, "This can't be happening."

"What?" David asked, stopping her by gently grabbing her arm.

"Your son and his wife are going to be my foster parents during World War II. He's the one who gave me my name. In his garage, he had an old printing press from his days working for the newspaper, which did he say it was. He said that it was the same one his father worked at. The Sun? The World?"

"The World. There was a strike there last summer. The bigwigs at the newspapers tried to raise the price of papers," Race commented as he walked over to them. Taking her hand, he brought it to his lips and gently kissed it. She smiled and thanked him. When she looked up at David, he was a little daze.

"A son?" He inquired when he finally came back to his senses.

"Yup. I believe you even had a daughter, but I didn't see her much. Your son lived in New Jersey, while your daughter lived in Canada. Your family is very tight, very loving. I loved that while I was there. When I moved there I was a timid little mouse. Your son and his wife helped me get passed that and now I'm the person who I am, to the dismay of my fellow country people. Fellow, my eye," she muttered that last statement with so much venom they looked at her funny.

"Speaking of your fellow country people," Spot asked when she was done. "How the heck did you get here? You came out of mid air, and in my lap, for that matter."

"I'm sorry, Spot. I had no choice in where I landed. As far as I knew I could have landed in New Mexico. Now for how I got here, I think I might have got her through a portal of some kind."

"A portal?" They all asked. "What's a portal?"

"I think it's like a doorway of some kind. All I know is that I was in the gardens of my boarding school and I heard the noises of the city. I got closer and the noises got louder. I thought maybe there was a city nearby, so I went through the trees and landed here. And I fell because I tripped over someone's shoes when I got here."

They all looked down, and Spot saw that the shoes were his. He started to grow red around the neck, and he went over to get them. Grabbing them, he stuffed his two feet into them, and tied them up tight. Looking up at her, he gulped, saying, "Sorry, Maggie. I shouldn't have left them there."

"It's alright," she said as she walked over and sat next to him on the bed. Patting him on the forearm, she continued on, "It's not as if you knew I was going to be here. By the way, what did you call me?"

"Maggie. Why? Don't you like it?" Spot asked.

"Yeah, I like it. That's what David called me."

"Who's David?" Jack asked.

"David's son. That's what he called me for the first year or so until I got into his wrought iron printing press. From then on, he called me Prints. He said that I was a natural at the press. Too bad I was born in the wrong era."

"Now you get to use it. I saw in the paper that The World's looking for people who know how to use the old presses. You're perfect," Spot expressed.

She threw up her hands, and groaned, but she kept her smiled, "I'm here ten minutes, and already, you have me lined up for the perfect job. How lucky can a girl be?"

"I'm sure she can get luckier," he muttered under his breath.

"What?" she asked, looking his way. She had heard him say something, just didn't heard what he said.

"Nothing," he quickly said. Then to get the attention of him, he asked, "What do you have against England? You seem not to speak to highly of it."

"It's not the country I'm having problems with. It's the people. They are so snotty. I could be doing absolutely nothing and they would still find some fault in what I was doing. Did you know that ok is considered slang in that country? And the boarding schools, man, am I glad I'm away from there. Those places are terrible. I'm used to the normal American schools. I loved them."

"Why were you sent out to the States, anyway?" Race asked.

"Well, in the early 1940s, World War II started, and my mother didn't want me to stay there and take the chance of getting myself killed or

injured. She would rather that I live somewhere safe, then to say at home with her. So, for five years, I lived in southern New Jersey and it was the best thing that happened in my life."

"How old were you when you were sent there?"

"I was about nine, almost ten, and I was fifteen when I was sent back. Only a few months had past when I went through the portal. I hadn't been home long."

Their conversation was interrupted by a figure that walked into the bunkroom. It was Kloppman and it was time for them to get to bed. Another busy day was coming upon them, and they needed their sleep. It wasn't until he was about out the room when he noticed Margaret.

"Hey, who's this?"

"This Margaret Markenson, or Prints. She's going to stay with us," Spot said as he introduced them to each other.

"Can I?" she almost pleaded. She had nowhere to stay, and no money to get her anywhere.

"Yeah, newsies get their first night, then they have to start paying ten cents a night. Are you going to be a newsie?" Kloppman stated

"Actually, Spot mentioned that they were looking for people to work the old wrought iron presses at The World. I thought I'd try that before I tried being a newsie, if that's alright," she reassured him.

"Yeah, that's alright. I don't care how you get your money as long you get it, and you're comfortable with how you get it."

"Thanks, Kloppman. You're the best," she said, reaching up and giving him a small kiss on the cheek. He started to blush and she said, quickly, her smile leaving her face, "Sorry, I shouldn't have done that."

"It's alright. It's just that a pretty girl doesn't often kiss me. Normally, all the pretty girls go to one of these young rascals," he told her. They knew that he was kidding because he liked them all. No matter how many pretty girls they talk to every week.

"Ok," she stated as a smile returned to her face.

He straightened himself up and smiled once more. Then he turned, and continued with his lights out routine. Just as he reached the door, he turned back slightly, and called to Jack, "Hey, Jack. Make sure Margaret gets a bed. I doubt she's going to want to sleep on the floor. That floor is mighty hard."

"Alright, Kloppman. Will do," he called out as he searched under his mattress for something. Once he found it, he stood up, and started looking around the room. There was one bed left, and that's where she slept. It was right next to the window, and a gentle breeze flowed through the open window.

'I must have the best bed in the room,' she thought. 'It's right next to the window. Where I can look out into the nights of New York.'

Sitting on her bed, she started taking off her shoes when she remembered. She had nothing to sleep in. It was out of the question for her to sleep in her school uniform. That thing was uncomfortable to be in even during the day. It was probably torture at night.

Getting up, so she could go ask Jack about it, she was stopped by Spot. He handed her a pair of pants and an oversized shirt. She held them and looked at them with a confused look. So he said,

"These are for you to sleep in. I figured that you wouldn't have anything except what you're wearing. They don't look to comfortable."

"Thanks," she said as she headed for the bathroom. Just before she reached the doorway, she stopped, turned around and walked back. Spot was working on his shoes, so he didn't hear her return, so he was surprised when she asked,

"Whose clothes are they?"

"They're mine," he replied.

"Yours?"

"Yeah. Mine," he said again.

"I can't take your clothes. That doesn't seem right," she said as she tried to give them back.

"No, it's ok. You can wear them. They're just going to lie around for a while. No sense in them going to waste when someone needs them more than I do," he said as he held up his hands to push them back into her arms. The occasional touch of their hands sent jolts of electricity up both of their arms, and they both stopped the pushing. When they had stopped, the clothes fell on the floor.

Bending over, he picked up the shirt and pants, and put them back in her arms. Turning her back towards the bathroom, he walked her there and said, one last time, "You're going to wear those clothes because you have nothing else to wear. You can't wear those around the streets of New York. You'll get in trouble. So just put those clothes on, and stop with all the fuss. Ok?"

"Ok," she said as she headed into the bathroom. Just as she stepped in, she called over her shoulder, "I'm not doing this for you. I'm doing it because these clothes are to uncomfortable and I want to get them off."

"Then do so," he called back at her.

Five minutes, she walked out and all was quiet. The room was dark and she had to slowly walk through the room as she groped for her bed. She walked to the window, then found her bed. Lying down, she got

herself settled, and got to sleep. It was the deepest sleep she'd had in a long time. At least, ever since she had left New Jersey.

What she didn't know that Spot had watched her come in. He watched her search for bed, and get into it. For some reason, he couldn't tear his eyes away from her, and he didn't know why. There was no reason to have an infatuation with this girl when he had just met her. Shaking his head, as he tried to get himself to sleep, he wondered if he would ever be able to figure it out.

"Wake up, the presses are rolling. Sell the papers, sell the papers," a voice boomed through the bunkroom. They all groaned, cause they didn't want to get up, but they had to. Getting up, they grabbed their clothes from, where they were, and slowly made their way to the bathroom.

Prints was still asleep and it looked like she wasn't getting up. Spot came back in and noticed she was still asleep. Returning to the bathroom, he grabbed a bucket and filled it halfway with warm water. He walked over and held it over her head. Before he poured it, he called out,

"Hey, Prints. Are you going to get up? Time for work."

She opened her eyes and immediately saw the bucket of water over her head. Quickly, she scrambled off her bed, and said, "Don't you dare, Spot Conlon. You do that, and I'll get you someday."

"Well, then all you have to do is get up, and I won't have to," he explained.

"Oh, we'll see about that," she commented as she reached up and tipped the bucket over. The water flowed out of the bucket and onto his head, drenching him. She just stood there, as he looked stunned. Looking down at his clothes, he tried to figure out what just happened.

"Why did you do that?" he asked as he shook off some of the loose water.

"Because," she replied, a smile growing bigger on her face by the second and each minute that passed, it became harder to suppress the laughter in her.

"That's not a reason," he stated. Then he lunged over the bed at her, calling out, "I'm going to get you."

She started running around the room, dodging the newsies and the bunks. Reaching the door, she cried, "I don't think so, Mr. Conlon. You've got to catch me first."

Running out the door with him not that far behind, she reached the steps and slipped down the banister. Spot just stood there as she slid down. He had never seen someone do that before, and he was amazed. Returning to his senses when he remembered his wet clothes, he bounding down the steps and continued chasing her.

"Help, Kloppman. Save me," Prints shouted as she tried to hide behind

Kloppman.

"Hey, you two. Keep me out of this," he said, laughing as he got out of the way.

When Kloppman was out of the way, Spot lunged for Prints, and he pinned her against the desk. She tried to wiggle out of his grasp, but he had a tight hold on her. Finally, she stopped struggling, and looked at him. Panting heavily, she asked, "Now what?"

"Now, you tell me why you poured all that water on me?" He asked, glaring at her.

Trying to look innocent, she explained, "Well, it seemed like a good idea at the time."

"It seemed like a good idea at the time," he muttered angrily, "What the hell's wrong with you?!" He bellowed.

"Nothing, just felt like having a little fun," she said. Pulling her arm from his hand, she pulled his hat down over his eyes, and smiling, she asked, "Don't you like fun?"

"Yes, I like fun," he said, still angry. Loosening his grip on her, he fixed his hat and stated, "However, I don't like the fun that requires me getting all wet when I don't want to."

"Ah, come on," she inquired. Pulling herself free, she started for the stairs. Stopping at the stairs, she said, "Where's your sense of adventure?"

"Sorry, I forgot to pack that with me last night."

She smiled and walked up the stairs. Spot just stood there for a minute, while he watched her go up them. For some reason, he couldn't help smiling and wondering what he was going to do with her. Sighing, he followed her up the stairs and into the bunkroom.

"Hey, Spot. Do you need a towel?"

"Yeah. Thanks, Race," Spot replied once he was in the bunkroom. He was still dripping from his "shower" that morning. Catching the towel as Race threw it, Spot vigorously dried himself off, so that at least he wasn't dripping water all over the place. Now he would just be damp.

Throwing the towel over one of the bunk ends, he walked over to where Prints was sitting. She was brushing her hair, so she could put it up. It looked like it was going to be a hot day, and she didn't feel like being weighted down by all her hair. It wasn't until she was done braiding her hair, that she noticed that Spot was standing next to her.

Looking up at him, a smile crossed her face as she tried not to laugh. Spot looked around and asked, "What?"

"Uh, you might want to look in the mirror," she said as she pointed to his hair.

Walking into the bathroom, he looked in the mirror and saw that his

hair was sticking up, in all directions. He looked like a porcupine. Grabbing a comb from the sink, he ran it through his hair, and it no longer stuck up. Finally, he returned to the bunkroom and everyone was ready to leave. Running out of the bunkroom, they all rushed out of the building as they headed for the center.

Arriving at the center, they all got in line with Jack at the front. Spot was in line behind him and David, so that he could get his papers. Prints decided to wait on a nearby bench as she waited for them to return. While she waited, she looked around and smiled at the similarities. When she had been in the States, David and Sue had taken them on many trips into New York.

'Not much will change, for the next forty years,' she thought. 'At least that's something to look forward to.'

Looking at the line, she saw there was a hold up. Jack was the first in line, and he still hadn't gotten his papers. Groaning, she stood up and walked to the front of the gangplank and pushed her way through the line. In behind the black metal bars, there stood a big man and two younger men, who were sitting around, doing nothing.

"What's the hold up?" She asked Spot.

"These lugs won't give us our papers," he told her.

"Why?"

He shrugged his shoulders, and she looked at the men behind the counter. The bigger man looked like he hadn't seen a shower in months, and he needed new clothes too. The other two men, she was told they were the Delancy brothers, were sitting in nearby chairs. When she had came into view, they started leering at her, and got up from their chairs, and approached the window.

"Hey, girly! What are you doing here?" One of them asked.

"The name is Prints, not _girly_! And I'm here because I want to know what's the hold up?"

"The hold up is that these two apes are lazy," Jack commented as he glared at both of them.

The closest brother sneered at Jack and looked at Prints. Looking her over, he commented, licking his lips, "There's a quicker way for you to get your papers, little girl, if you know what I mean."

"Leave her alone, Morris," Spot ordered, wrapping his arm around her shoulders.

"Stay out of this," Morris bellowed.

"Don't worry, Spot. I can take care of myself," Prints said as she removed his arm from around her.

Stepping to the window, she beckoned for Morris to come closer. A smile spread across his face as he eagerly approached the window.

Once he was within reach, Prints grabbed the lapels of his shirt and slammed him against the bars. Holding him there, she hissed at him, "If you two don't get off your lazy carcasses and give my friends their papers, I'm going to kick your ever-loving bodies through this city. And the next time, I see you look at me like that, I'm going to get Spot's slingshot and play bullseye with your testicles."

Morris slowly gulped, a worried look his eyes. He nodded and she let him go. Grabbing his brother's sleeve, he drug him to get the papers from the back. Hurriedly, they dragged stacks of papers into the office, and started to hand out papers as fast as the newsies gave their money. Leaving the dock, she returned to the bench, where she waited for Spot to come down off the dock.

Five minutes later, he approached her and she smiled when he came over. Returning her smiled, he sat down next to her and wondered, "Why did you do that? You could have gotten hurt?"

"Oh, those two oafs! They're nothing but big babies. I can handle them."

"I'm sure you can, but next time, be a little more careful. You don't know what the people are like around here," Spot stated.

"Alright, I will," she promised. Looking around the center, she noticed that everyone was about ready to leave. Standing up, she commented to him, "Shouldn't you be taking me to The World for my job?"

"Yeah, let's go," he said as he stood up. Walking, side by side, they headed out of the center and towards The World building the middle of town.

Reaching The World building, they walked up the many steps and opened the double doors. Walking into the brightly-lit lobby, they walked up to the receptionist and waited for her to notice them. Once she did, she put down her pencil, and asked, "Yes?"

"I'm here about the job with the presses," Prints told her.

"The presses, huh? Let me call Mr. Martel."

The receptionist picked up the phone, and pointed to some chairs that were off to the side. Sitting down, they leaned back in the seats as they waited for Mr. Martel. The secretary got their attention and told them, "Mr. Martel will be down in a minute or so."

They nodded and continued their waiting. Finally, a tall man in a blue suit came walking towards them. He had silver hair and the look of friendliness. When he finally arrived, he held out his hand, and shook hands with each of them. Pulling a chair over, he sat down in front of them, and inquired, "Now which of you asked about the job with the presses?"

"I did," Prints replied.

"You?" he asked.

Nodding, she asked, "Is there a problem with that?"

"No, there's not a problem," he said, hoping to reassure her. "It's just that we need someone who can handle the work of the presses. These presses can get heavy at times, and we need someone who can keep up with the weight."

"You don't have to worry about that. I've used the presses many times and I know how to use them, and I can handle them."

"What reassurances do I have that you will keep up with everything?"

"I have none, but tell you what. Let me work for you for a week, if I can't prove that I can keep up, you can tell me not to come back, and I will. Does that sound fair?"

Mr. Martel leaned back in his chair and rubbing his chin as he thought deeply about the proposition. He wasn't sure if it would work. After he looked her up and down, he figured that she wouldn't last one day. Leaning forward in his chair, he looked her in the eye, and said, "Ok, we'll try it, but if after a week, you aren't able to keep up, I'll let you go. That will be your chance."

"That's all I ask for," she said.

"Alright," he said, standing up. "Why don't we get you all signed up and I'll show you where you'll be working?"

She nodded and stood up. Spot stood up too, and told her, "I'm going to go sell now. How about I meet you here and we'll walk somewhere for lunch?"

"Sure," she replied.

"Alright. See you then," Spot said, turning and walked away.

Prints watched him leave until he was out of sight. Once he was gone, she realized how alone she was. The newsies were the only ones in the city that she knew, and none of them were with her. Sighing, she tried to get a hold of her fears and followed Mr. Martel to his office.

It was now lunchtime, and Spot was sitting on the steps in front of The World building. He had finished early, so he decided to get there early. After he had been sitting there for about ten minutes when she walked out of the building. She was staggering a little bit and looked tired. Standing up, he walked to her and asked her, his voice full of concern, "Are you ok?"

"Yeah, I'm fine. Just tired. This is a lot more than I expected," she told him.

"Ok," he said with uncertainty. "Why don't we go meet the guys for lunch?"

"Sure," she said as she stifled a yawn.

He eyed her as she walked down the steps. Catching up with her, he led her to Tibby's. When they reached Tibby's, everyone was there. Spot and Prints sat down and gave their order to a passing waiter.

"So how was your morning?" Race asked as he took a sip of his water.

"Just fine. Tiring, but fine," she told him as she leaned on her hand.

"Isn't it always?" Jack commented. They all chuckled because their mornings were always tiring. "Do you have to be back after lunch?"

She perked up a little, and commented, "That's one thing that's great about this job. I only have to work mornings from seven to noon. Isn't that great?"

"Yeah," they all said. That was something they wished they could do. Work only in the mornings and do whatever in the afternoons, but a newsies job doesn't do that for them. They have to work all day to make money for food and lodging.

Finally, they're food arrived and they started eating. After finishing his sandwich, Spot was going to ask Prints a question when he stopped. Gesturing to her, he whispered, "She fell asleep."

Prints was leaning against the wall and she was out like a light. She was so dead to the world that she didn't hear a waiter drop a bucket of dishes near their table.

"Ah, man," Race groaned. "What are we going to do with her?"

"I'll take her back to the lodging house," Spot volunteered.

Scooting out of his seat, he gently picked her and cradled her in his arms. Walking her out of Tibby's, he carried her back to the lodging house.

Finally, he reached the lodging house and slowly walked up the stairs. Entering the bunkroom, Spot placed her on her bed. Sitting on the next bed, he sat there watching her. While he was watching her, he didn't hear someone walk up the stairs.

Jack appeared in the doorway and watched him. Smiling, he quietly walked into the room and sat down on the bed, next to Spot. Spot was startled when Jack sat down, but he quickly got over it. Looking between the two, Jack asked, "You really like her, don't you?"

"What?" Spot asked, surprised.

"You really like her, don't you?" he repeated his question at he watched Spot's reaction.

"Yeah, but I don't know why," Spot told him. "I mean, I just met her and everything."

"I don't know either. My mom told me that when you meet the right person, it's like lightning," Jack told him. He smiled when Spot gave him a look like he was weird. "No, Spot, I don't mean like real lightning. I don't know how to explain it. She said that it would be different with each person, and you would know it when it happened."

"I guess, but how am I supposed to know if it's the same with her?" Spot asked as he continued to watch her.

"You can't. All you can do is wait and time will tell," Jack told him.

"Alright, I guess that's all I can do right now," Spot sighed.

Standing up, Jack gestured to the door and suggested, "We had better go. The afternoon edition will be out soon. She'll be alright. Kloppman is downstairs and he'll make sure nothing happens to her."

Spot nodded and stood up, following him to the door. Stopping for a second, he looked back at Prints and wished he didn't have to leave. Finally, he followed Jack down the stairs and out of the building, so they could go to the center.

Later on that day, Prints woke up saw that she was in her bed. Everything was quiet except for the occasional shout from outside the window. 'How did I get here?' she wondered.

Getting up, she stretched her arms out and over her head, and every bone in her body creaked loudly. She was still sore from that morning, but that was something she was use to. Hard work was nothing that she wasn't used to, but since she had gotten home, her mother wouldn't let her do anything that she was capable of doing.

"That's not ladylike. Don't do that. Girls don't normally do that," she mimicked. Her mother was always telling her what she could and couldn't do. Nothing was the same. She had expected there to be differences between the two countries, but not that much of a difference.

Growling, she walked over to the window and looked out. She saw that it was still daylight out and the newsies were still selling their papers. Since it was still daylight, she decided to go outside.

"Hey, Margaret," Kloppman called from his office.

"What?" she said when she reached the bottom of the stairs. Walking over to the desk, she waited for his response.

Standing up from his chair, he walked over to the desk and placed a

book on it. Handing her a pencil and told her, "You need to sign in for last night and tonight. This book is so that I know who's here and who's not."

She nodded and signed her name in the first empty slot. Placing the pencil in the crease of the book, she closed the book. Picking it up, she handed it back to him, and asked, "Is that all?"

"One more thing," he said as he put the book back on its stand on the front of the desk. Returning to her, he leaned against the desk and asked, "Were you able to get that job at The World building?"

"Yeah, I did. Right now, I'm on a week trial basis," she told him. "I'm sure that I can pass the week, though. I can keep up with any kind of work given to me."

"Great, so you won't have to worry about paying for your room."

"That's one thing I need to talk to you about," she commented. "I found out that if I do get this job, I get paid every Friday. Is there any chance that I could just pay you each Friday for the next week? On this Friday, I'll pay you for this week and next week. That way you'll always have a week in advance."

"That works out just fine. Just so long as everything is taken care of," he said as he straightened himself up. He waved at someone just entering, and Prints looked to see who it was. She smiled when she saw it was Spot. Walking over to him, she asked, "How was your selling?"

"Oh, so so. Same as it always is. How was your nap?"

"How did I get here?"

"You fell asleep while at Tibby's. I carried you back here," he told her. She got a confused look on her face.

"I did?"

Nodding, he said, "You were tired. Must be from all that hard work you did this morning."

"That's probably it. I'm used to hard work, but since I came home, my mother wouldn't let me do much of anything. All I was allowed to do was sit inside and keep my grandmother company. _Boring_."

"I bet," he commented.

"I mean, my grandmother was raised during the Victorian era, and at that time, children were best seen and not heard. Man, gag me with a stick. I hated living there. It probably wouldn't have been so bad if my grandmother wasn't there," she continued on.

"That doesn't sound all that bad. Just that you had a grandmother you didn't like," he pointed out.

At this time, Jack came in and stopped behind them. He had heard Spot's last comment and was curious about what they were talking about. Wrinkling his forehead, he asked, "What are you two talking

about?"

"She was talking about some things she disliked about her home," Spot told him.

"Well, I doubt that anyone's home is a bed full of roses, but you have to get by."

They both nodded at his observation, and Jack smiled. He understood what it was like to have a different home life. His childhood consisted of his father drinking and beating on his mother. Whenever he tried to stop his father, his father just tore into him. After his mother died, and his father was put in jail, he figured that the home life wasn't for him. All he would do is go to Santa Fe and start up a ranch or something there. However, when he met Sarah, during the strike, his entire life changed. He started to rethink his possibilities of a home life.

"Why don't we put that aside for now? Spot, don't we need to continue our game from last night? After all, we were a tad bit interrupted last night," he said with a broad smile.

Prints blushed a little and Spot started to laugh. "Don't worry, Prints. It wasn't your faultâ€|entirely."

"Oh, geez, thanks," she said, sarcastically.

"Come on, you two. Fight about this later. We have a game to finish," he said. Pointing at Spot, he stated, "I am going to win that pot tonight."

"Oh, we'll see about that," Spot commented as he followed him up the stairs.

Now everyone was coming in for the night. They were all talking about the poker game, and they all wondered who would win. 'Jack must have gotten word out about continuing the game,' she figured.

Following them up, Prints sat down on her bed, and watched the commotion from there. The game was right in front of the window, since it was so hot out, and a cool breeze was blowing through the window. From her bed, Prints had a great view of the game.

For most of the game, it was pretty quiet. Each person got their chance to deal the cards, and do what they wanted with them. It finally came to the last hand, and they were all sweating. The pot had grown bigger, and still each newsie wanted it.

During the game, Prints mostly watched how Spot played. However, some of her thoughts weren't exactly on the game. They kept wondering to the person playing the game.

'Ok, he must have a good card,' she thought. 'His face may not show it, but his eyes do. Oh, what beautiful eyes they are. How is it that he can be so friendly to me? After I, literally, fell in his lap last night. He's nice, handsome and very friendly. That's everything a person could ask for. I know he'll never like me in the way I wish he

would.' Then Spot looked up, and flashed his prize smile at her, and she smiled back, blushing a little.

Finally, the game ended and Jack was the victor with a full house. While he collected all the money, he grinned like an idiot. Putting the money in his pouch, he commented, "I guess I got this game."

"Yeah, you did," Spot muttered. "However, you might not be so lucky next time. After all, next month's game is in Brooklyn."

"I know, know," Jack said, throwing his hands up in the air. "You say that every time."

"And I'll keep saying it."

"Ok, sure. Whatever you say."

Kloppman came in, at this time, and was going through his bedtime routine. The day was over, and it was time for bed. So they could get up, the next morning, and start it all over again.

Gathering up his stuff, Spot stuffed them in a bag, and was about to leave when Prints called after him, "Where are you going? It's a little late for a midnight stroll."

"I'm going back to Brooklyn," he told her, switched his back to his other hand.

"Brooklyn? What do you mean? Don't you live here?"

"No, my house is in Brooklyn. I'm the leader of the newsies there. Jack's the leader of the newsies here," he tried to explain.

Sitting on her bed, she put her head in her hands as she tried to make sense of all this. She was just getting used to having Spot around, and now she finds out that he doesn't even live there.

"Are you ok?" Spot asked her as he knelt down beside her.

"Yeah, I'm fine. It's just that, no one explained all this to me. I thought that everyone lived here. I didn't know that you lived on the other side of New York."

"Well, I do," he stated. "However, I do come up here, once in a while. I come to see my friends."

"Friends?"

"Yeah, you're one of my friends now," he said as he took her hand in his and squeeze it gently.

That helped her feel better. At least, she knew that he wasn't going to disappear totally from her life.

"Thanks," she told him as she squeezed back.

"For what?" he asked, curiously.

"Being my friend."

"Well, you're very welcome. I hate to leave, but if I don't leave now, Kloppman is going to make me stay. And I need to get back to make sure no one has burnt it down, since I was there last."

She nodded and smiled. Smiling back at her, he stood up, with his bag in hand, and walked out of the room. She watched him as he left, and it felt like something had left with him. Something she couldn't quite figure out.

Sighing, she got cleaned up and got into bed. Looking around, she watched as the last of the newsies got into their beds and the room flooded with darkness. With the darkness came a still silence. It seemed different that night, then the previous night. Was it cause Spot was there, or maybe cause she was in a new place? She didn't know the answers to these questions, and it confused her.

Wrapping her arms around herself, she curled up under her blanket and fell asleep, instantly. There were still some of the lingering exhaustion from her hard day at work that morning.

"Oh, g-d, am I sore," Prints commented as she sat down in front of her lunch.

It was lunchtime and she had just finished her second day at the presses. She was sore, when she woke up that morning, but it wore off as the day continued on. It seemed like it was easier, now that it was her second day, but it still tired her.

"Why don't you take a hot shower?" Sarah commented as she ate her lunch. "It's done wonders for me after a long day."

That day, Sarah was eating lunch with the newsies, while she was in between shifts at the hospital. She had gotten a job there as a secretary, and she was pulling these weird shifts. It was unusual if she wasn't working or asleep during lunch.

"I've heard that. Maybe I'll try that when I got back to the house," she told her.

"If that doesn't work, all I can tell you is either rest when you can, or come in, and I think one of the doctors can give you a cream for it."

"Well, hopefully, it won't get to that extreme," Prints pointed out.

Jack and the guys came in, and sat down at their table. All twelve of them were trying to fit in a booth for six. A waiter came by and took all their orders, and after he was gone, they all started chattering away.

Finishing her food, Prints stood up in the booth, and hopped over the side. Walking to the front of the table, she stated, "I hate to eat and run, but I need to take Sarah's suggestion."

"What's that?" Race asked.

"Sarah," she smiled in almost a mischievous way. "You tell them."

"Oh, great. How am I going to tell them what we talked about?" she asked, sarcastically.

"Don't worry. You'll figure it out. Bye," Prints said as she waved to them all.

They called out their good byes and she walked out the door. Heading to the lodging house, she went into the bunkroom, and grabbed a towel from the closet. Walking into the silent bathroom, she turned on the water to on full blast and waited for it to heat up. Once it was hot enough, she undressed and stepped in, sighing immediately as her sore muscles began to relax.

BACK AT TIBBY'S

Everyone's food was arriving, and they were starting to eat. Hearing the bell over the front door, they all looked up and they saw a walking mudball. The mudball came closer and they saw that it was Spot. He was dripping mud all over the floor, and a waiter, who was behind him, was about ready to throw him out. Stopping at their table, Spot said, "Don't you say a word."

Everyone tried to keep from smiling, but it couldn't be helped. All of their faces broke into smiles and Spot scowled. Finally, Jack asked, "What happened to you?"

"I was walking out here, after selling my papers, when I got pushed into a mudhole. It was from that rain we had a few days ago. This was a big hole. Mud everywhere. Well, by the time I got out, I was just covered in mud."

"We can all see that," Kid Blink stated with a big grin.

Spot scowled at him and then asked Jack, "Is there any chance I can shower at the house?"

"Sure, go ahead. Kloppman isn't there right now, but he won't mind. Just don't make a mess like you did last night. He didn't really appreciate cleaning up your mess last time," Jack reminded him before he walked out.

"Me?" He said as he pressed his hand to his chest. "What are you talking about? I never make a mess."

"Sure, you say. Just don't make a mess now," Jack said.

"Ok, no problem," Spot said and left the restaurant.

"Jack, do you know what you just did?" Sarah asked him.

"What? What did I do now?" He protested.

"I guess I didn't tell you, but Prints went back to the house to get a shower. She was still sore from work this morning," she told him.

"Oh, no," Jack moaned as he sunk into the seat. "And we just sent Spot there to get a shower." He looked out the window and the life mudball had long since disappeared. "Guess we're going to have an interesting show when we get back."

"Jack, you're mean," Sarah said as she slapped him on the shoulder.

"I know, but you love me, anyway," he said as he kissed her on the cheek.

"We'll see about that," she stated, poking him in the chest, but smiling.

Spot arrived at the house and all was quiet. Running up the stairs, he grabbed a towel and a washcloth from the closet. Going into the bathroom, he threw the towel on the sink, and dampened the wash cloth. Using it, he tried to get some of the mud of his hands, face, and other parts of his body. While cleaning himself, he realized that the shower was running.

Looking in the mirror, he saw on the floor a pile of someone's clothing. Walking over, he picked up the shirt, and realized that they were his. Squirming a little, he tried to quickly grab his towel, and dash out, but before he could, the water turned off, and the door opened.

Stepping out of the shower, she was surprised when she saw Spot standing there in the bathroom. Wrapping the towel tighter around her, she mumbled, "I'm sorry" and started to grab her clothes from the floor. Straightening up, she balled her clothes on her chest and started to walk out of the room.

As she walked passed him, Spot stepped closer to her and grabbed her arm. She stopped and looked at his hand, then up at Spot. His touch made her scared because she wasn't sure about her feelings. As he held her arm, they just stood there and looked at each other.

Then, he placed his other hand on her neck and leaned closer to her. Leaning into him, she accepted his kiss. This kiss was different from anything she had ever experienced. Boys have kissed her before, but nothing like this. It seemed like everything was possible with this kiss.

During the kiss, she felt Spot's hand start to wonder. She knew what he wanted, but she wasn't ready for that yet. Placing her hand on his chest, she gently pushed him away, saying, "No, we can't."

"What do you mean, 'we can't'?"

"I mean, I'm not ready for this. You may be ready, but I'm not. I'm sorry," she said as she broke herself from his grasp and walked out of the bathroom.

Spot just stood there and tried to figure things out. He knew that he shouldn't have tried that. One girl that made him want to forget his past and all the hurt it caused him.

Before he became a newsie, he had a wonderful family and they were all happy. They lived in Brooklyn, but on the upper section of town. His father was a stockbroker and he loved his job. He had been at his job for the past ten years and there was nothing else better that he wanted to do. However, after working there for nine years, he started getting a little edgy, like something was going on that he didn't like.

Then, one day a year later, his father came home early one day. Going through the entire house, he ordered that their clothes be put into bag, so they could leave. During the packing, his father asked ten year old James (Spot), "James, could you go up to the attic and get another suitcase?"

"Why can't Margie do it?" he asked. He had been in the middle of a marble game and didn't want to leave.

"Because she's busy helping your mother with something. Just go get it, please," he pleaded, placing his hand on his son's shoulders. James nodded and climbed the long, three flights of stairs that lead to the attic. Searching through the attic, it took him a while to find the suitcase.

Finding it, he headed back downstairs. Reaching the bottom of the attic stairs, with his hand on the doorknob, he heard screams of his mother and Margie. After the screams, he heard gun shots ring through house.

Standing up, he slowly walked back up the stairs and went to a window that was at the front of the attic. This window overlooked the front door, and he sat behind it, as he watched and waited. He didn't know what he was waiting for, but he knew he had to stay there. Finally, as it grew darker, he saw a single man run out the door. Instinct told him that this man was the only one in the house.

Cautiously, he walked down the stairs to where he had left his family. At first, it looked like nothing happened, like everyone left in a hurry. But when he went to their bedroom, the sight horrified him. Everything was a mess. Furniture was all over the place, along with his mother's figurines.

Amongst all the mess, there were his mother, father, and Margie. They were lying on the floor, very still. Coming closer, James realized that they weren't alive. The man who had left has shot all three of them. James didn't know why they were shot, but he knew that he couldn't stay there. The man could come back.

Quickly, he packed a single bag with clothes and personal items, and ran out of the house. Running down the streets, he ran to his friend, Jack Kelly. He was the leader of the Manhattan Newsies and he could help me figure out what to do.

Arriving at the Manhattan house, he found Jack and his friends, in the bunkroom, playing their usual poker game. They all turned when they heard him come in. Jack stood up when he saw that Spot was carrying a bag with him and he had this scared look on his face. His friend, Spot never looked scared for any reason. Walking over to him,

Jack asked, "Are you alright?"

"I don't think so," Spot replied as he sunk into an empty bunkbed.

"Why? What's wrong?" Jack asked, his voice filled with concern as he sat down next to him.

"It's my parents. Someone killed them," Spot asked, his voice quivering a little.

"What?" Jack asked, exasperated.

"I don't know what happened, but my father came home early today, and he had everyone packing stuff. He asked me to go into the attic to get another suitcase. Well, while I was up there, someone came in and shot both my parents and Margie."

"Oh, Spot. I'm sorry. What can I do to help?"

"First, I need someplace to stay. I can't stay in my house. The person, who shot my parts, might come back," Spot stated.

"I wish I could say that you could stay here, but we don't have the room. However, I think there's room at the Brooklyn house," Jack pointed out.

"The Brooklyn house? Won't he find me there?" Spot asked.

"Spot, do you honestly think he's going to look there for you, even if he is looking for you? You're from a rich family, he's not going to look in a newsie lodging house."

"You're right. He wouldn't. I'll live in Brooklyn, then," Spot said.

"Ok, let's go," Jack said as he stood up, walking towards the door. Spot followed him, and they both walked to Brooklyn.

From that time on, Spot lived at the Brooklyn house. It wasn't long before everyone respected him, and after he had lived there for three years, he became the leader. This was a happy day for him. He hadn't had many since his parents died, and he still had periods where he wished they were still there.

A year after his parents died, they eventually found the man who had killed them. It was a client of his father, and the man was mad about a deal, he had made with his father, and it had fell through. It wasn't his father's fault, but the man thought it was.

Spot could have gone back, but he was happy being a newsie and being with his friends. All the money, from his family, sat in a bank account for Spot, so that if he ever needed it, it was there. However, he never had a reason for it.

By the time Spot walked into the bunkroom, Prints was dressed already, and was laying on the bed, looking out the window. Walking over to her, he sat on the edge of the bed, and said, "I'm

sorry."

"I know you are," Prints said while she sat up. "It's just that I don't know what's going on right now, and I want to see what happens first, before I make any big decisions."

"Well, I'm here for you," Spot said as he reached and grabbed her hand. "I'll wait for you."

"Why me? I'm only fifteen, and you're what, eighteen? Nineteen?" She said as she pulled her hand from his and stood up, walking to the window. "Surely you can find someone else."

"I'm nineteen, and I don't want anyone else," Spot stated as he walked to her side. Turning her to face him, he said, "From the moment you fell through that portal, it seems like you're the only one I can think about. There's not another girl for me."

"How can you say that? You only met me two days ago."

"Jack says that when it's right, it hits like lightning, and I feel that this is right."

"Well, I've heard that to, and I thought those people were talking hogwash, until I got here," she said, looking up at him.

Leaning down, he gently kissed her. Bringing her hands up, she wrapped them around his neck and he put his hands around her waist. They were so into the kiss that they didn't hear anything until everyone started hooting and hollering. Pulling apart, they stood there, surprised because they hadn't heard him come in.

Kid Blink commented, "You work fast."

"Oh, shut up," they both said at the same time and everyone started laughing.

Pulling further, Prints looked down at her clothes and saw there were specks of mud all over her clothes. Looking at Spot, she noticed that he was still covered in mud. Pointing at his clothes, she suggested, "You might want to get a shower. You're still covered in mud."

Looking down at his clothes, he grimaced when he remembered why he had come there. Smiling, he walked back into the bathroom, he got his shower.

THREE YEARS LATER

"Ms. Maggie!"

Over the last three years, she had been working at the presses for The World, and over time, Mr. Martel gave her a job as a supervisor. He was happy with her work, and that's how he showed it. She liked her job, and she was still able to work the same hours, except on Mondays, when she had to work in the afternoons.

Looking up from her desk, Maggie looked up to see Carrie, one of her helpers standing in her doorway. "Yes?"

"Spot's here to see you," she told her.

"Great, thanks. Can you show him up here?"

She nodded and left. Five minutes later, she returned with Spot in tow. Smiling, she opened the door for him, and he walked in. Tipping his hat at her, he smiled back and closed the door behind him.

Walking over to him, she hugged him and gave him a kiss. "What are you doing up here?"

Holding up the bag, he said, "Thought you might like to eat lunch with me today."

"Don't I every day?" she asked, smiling.

"Well, not on Mondays," he pointed out as he dropped the bag on her desk.

"You have a point there," she commented.

Pulling a chair over, she sat down as he started pulling food out of the bag. They were having tuna salad and rootbeer. He knew that was one of her favorites, and wanted that day to be special. Sitting down, he handed a plate of food to her, and sat down, eating his food.

After a few minutes of silence, Spot set his plate down on the desk, and looked at her. Wrinkling her forehead, she asked, "What?"

"Are you happy with me?"

Smiling, she placed her food on the desk, and took his hands in hers. Looking deep into his eyes, she stated, "I've never been happier with any other person. I love you and always will."

Releasing his hands, he pulled a small box out of his pocket. Opening the box, he handed it to her and asked, "I love you and I want to spend the rest of my life with you. Will you make me the happiest man alive, and marry me?"

Looking closer at the ring, she saw that it was a small ruby with an even smaller diamond on each side. It was the most beautiful ring she had ever seen. Smiling, she looked back at him, and replied, "Only if you'll make me the happiest woman alive."

"Oh, you bet I can," he commented. Taking the ring from its box, he placed it on her left hand, and kissed her.

Off in the distance, a whistle blew from the building. Lunch was over. Maggie leaned back and frowned because she didn't want lunch to be over. Spot scowled, too because he had forgotten that they had such a short lunch. Quickly, he smiled and stated, "We'll talk about everything tonight."

"Tonight," she stated. She walked him to the door, and they kissed one more time before he opened the door and walked away. Sighing, she watched until he was gone. Shutting the door, she walked back to her desk, and tried to do some work.

Ten minutes later, there was a knock and she realized that she hadn't done any work. Calling out, "Come in."

Her door opened and it was Mr. Martel. He was still the head of the pressroom, and once in a while he came down to check on his supervisors. Smiling, she stood up, and held out her hand to him. Shaking her hand, he sat down and she asked, "What can I do for you today?"

"I came down the check on things, like I normally do."

"Alright, I have those papers you asked for the last time you were down here. I just have to find them." Shifting the papers around on her desk, the light caught on her ring, and he noticed the shine. Leaning forward, he asked, "Now what is this?"

"What is what?" she asked, not sure what he was talking about.

"This," he said as he pointed towards her hand. "You didn't have that the last time I was here."

"Oh," she said, blushing.

"Was it from Spot?" He asked. Everyone knew that they had been dating for the last three years, and they all liked him.

"He asked me while he was here for lunch," she told him.

"And you're still here?" he asked her, a little surprised.

"Well, I have work to do," she protested, gesturing to her desk, which had papers strewn all over the place.

"Not today," he said, standing up and walking to her side of the desk. Taking one of her hands, he gently pulled her out of her chair and guided her to the door. Opening the door, he said, "You get the rest of the day off. It's not everyday that someone asks you to marry him."

"Are you sure?" she asked him, uncertainly.

"Yes, I am. Now go, I'll take over here for the day. Don't you worry."

"Ok," she finally said and walked out of her office. Everyone watched her as she left and applauded. They had heard Maggie and Mr. Martel's conversation, and they all congratulated her. She smiled as she thanked them all, and walked out of the building.

Arriving at Tibby's, she looked in the window, and saw that they were all eating. Spot was sitting with his back to the window, so he didn't see her come in. Gesturing for them to be quiet, she came up behind him and covered his eyes with her hands. This was a game they played sometimes, and they always laughed about it.

"Guess who?"

He smiled and said, "Uh, Sarah?"

"Nope."

"Jack?"

"Nope, guess again."

"I know, it has to be Maggie," he said, pulling her into his lap. Slapping his arm, she playfully said, "How did you know it was me?"

"Because we're played this game for to long."

"You're a nut," she stated.

"I know, but you love me anyway."

"That I do," she said and kissed him.

All the guys groaned, but smiled. Spot had told them about their lunch, and they were happy for them. It was about time that he asked her. During lunch, they talked about what they wanted at the wedding. It was going to be a simply, yet lovely. Just the way they wanted it.

FIVE YEARS LATER

"Maggie! Where are you?"

"I'm in Ellie's room," she shouted.

After five years of marriage, nothing had changed much. They now had three children, a boy and two girls. After they married, Spot and Maggie moved into a small house not that far from the lodging house. He owned the lodging house, and worked there, while she was now head supervisor, over her own section at Press Central, at The World.

Spot walked into his daughter's room, and smiled. Maggie was sitting on Ellie's bed as she read her a story. It was time for her to go to sleep, and she was fighting it all the way. She was full of Conlon, and both her parents knew it.

"Come on, sweetie. It's time for bed," Maggie said as she tried to persuade her.

"Not until I get my hug from daddy," Ellie stated, crossing her arms over her chest.

"Well, here I am," he stated as he sat down on her bed. Wrapping his arms around her, he gave her a hug and a gentle kiss on the top of her head. "Now you do as your mother says and go to sleep."

"Alright," she said, lying down on her pillow and falling asleep.

Pulling her covers over Ellie, Maggie stood up and followed Spot out of the room. Looking back one more time, she partially shut the door

and walked into the kitchen. Crossing the room to where her husband was, she fell into his arms and sighed.

"Long day?"

"You can say that again," she commented.

"What happened?"

"It seems like everything, that could go wrong, did. First, three of the presses broke down, and we were delayed getting out tomorrow's shipment. Then, when I got home, Ellie still wasn't feeling well, and I sent Callie and Tom to stay with Race and Kid Blink."

"She's not any better?" he asked, worried.

"No, and I believe she has the measles. I'm doing the best I can, but without that cure, she's going to have a tough time."

Over the past eight years, Maggie had told Spot various things about 1944. She told him about what was going on and all the great things that were happening. One thing, she had told him, was someone had come up with a cure for the measles.

"We'll make it. Nothing's going to happen to Ellie," Spot stated hugging her tighter.

"But what if she gets worse?" she asked, her voice trembling.

Pulling her from his arms, he looked her in the eyes and forcefully said, "Nothing, and I mean NOTHING will happen to Ellie. If we have to search out ever doctor in the country, we'll do what we can for her."

"Oh, I hope you're right," she said.

"I hope I am, too," he muttered as he pulled her back into his arms. "I hope I am, too."

AN HOUR LATER

"Maggie, can you hurry? Mrs. Jacobs is going to be here soon, and we have to hurry to the Martel's party."

"I need to check on Ellie first," she called as she pushed open the door to her daughter's room.

Leaning over her daughter's bed, she felt her daughter's forehead and gently kissed it. When she kissed her, she felt the familiar, yet unfamiliar warmth of the fever that was invading her daughter's body. Ellie had started feeling bad two days ago, and slowly it had gotten worse.

That day, when Maggie had come home from work, she noticed that there were spots all over her body, like chicken pox, but they were different. She was horror stricken when she had realized that the spots were measles. There was no cure for the measles yet, and it was hard to live through it.

Fixing the blankets, she sat on her bed and watched her daughter. Then, she noticed her daughter's breathing. It was raspy. Putting her hand on her daughter's throat, she felt her daughter's heartbeat and it was slow and shallow.

"Spot!"

"What?" He called, running into the room.

"Ellie's heartbeat is shallow," she said, unsteadily.

Spot put his hand in her place on Ellie's neck and he felt her heartbeat. His expression increase from worried to scared. Looking at Maggie, he asked, "What are we going to do?"

"I don't know. We have to wake her up, though," she said as she tried to wake her up. Gently slapping Ellie's cheeks, she said, "Wake up, sweetie. You need to get up." She didn't wake up, she just kept on sleeping.

Bundling her up, Maggie picked up Ellie and started to carry her out the door. Watching her go, he asked, "Where are you going?"

"The only place I can think of. I'm going to go through that portal and have my doctor help her," she replied as she headed for the door.

Grabbing their coats and hats, he followed her as she left the building. As they walked to the Manhattan house, he asked, "Do you think it's still there?"

Stopping, she looked at him and stated, "Well, it better be. It's the only chance we have of possible saving our daughter's life."

They started walked again and arrived at the house. Walking into the lobby, Kid Blink was standing behind the desk. He helped Spot and Kloppman during the nights. When he looked up, he was surprised to see Maggie come in, carrying Ellie, with Spot running behind them. Hurrying around the desk, he asked, "What are you two doing here? Don't you have to be at the Martel's party?"

"We were, but Ellie has gotten worse, and I'm going to have my doctor look at her," Maggie explained.

"Why would your doctor be here?" Kid Blink asked.

"Not my doctor here, my doctor in 1944," she pointed out as she climbed the stairs with Spot running after her.

"Mom, what are you doing here?" Callie asked when her mother came running into the room. "Is something wrong with Ellie?"

"She's going to be fine, but we're going to have to go through the portal. I'm taking her to my doctor there," she explained to her. Maggie had explained to her children about the portal and how she had gotten there. She didn't want to have any secrets from her family, and she felt that she had to tell them.

"Can we go?" Tom asked.

She looked at Spot and bit her lip. He nodded and she said, "Alright, you can come, but quickly get your coats." They cheered and got their coats from the coatroom. When they returned, their coats were buttoned up and they were ready to go.

"We're going to," Kid Blink stated as he pointed to him, Race and Jack.

> "Are you sure?" she asked looking at all of them. They all nodded and she smiled. Looking at Jack, she asked, "Are you sure? What about Sarah?"<p>

"Sarah moved to Maine. She had the chance to go to school to become a nurse, and she wanted to take that chance. I had to let her go."

Placing her hand on his arm, she moaned, "Oh, Jack. I'm sorry."

He shrugged his shoulders and stated, "It's alright. It's what she wanted, and I'm happy for her." Smiling, she hoped it comforted Jack, and it seemed to help a little.

Maggie and Spot put their coats on and bundled Ellie up tighter. Picking her up, Maggie and her family headed for where she thought the portal would be.

Looking at Spot, she took his hand in hers and they walked towards the portal.

1944

While they were in the portal, Maggie started to worry if this was going to work. After all, the first time she went through, she didn't know where she was going. Going through this time, there was no guarantee they were going to land in England, or even her time. All she could do was sit back and enjoy the ride.

Suddenly, they flew through the portal and landed with a thump. They all groaned when they hit the hard ground. Everything was silent for a minute or so, then they all sat up and looked around. They were in the gardens, and it was still daylight out. Looking around, she asked, "Is everyone alright?"

They groaned slightly as they sat up. Spot rubbed his bottom as he looked around the garden, then commented, "Yeah, we're fine. A little sore, but fine."

She smiled, then checked on Ellie. During the ride, she had clutched her daughter to her chest, very tightly. So there wouldn't be a chance of her getting torn from her arms. Ellie's skin was still warm, and her breathing was still raspy. This worried her because she didn't have these symptoms when she had the measles, but her daughter had the spots. And there hadn't been an outbreak of chickenpox lately, just friends of Ellie's who had gotten the measles.

Quickly, but gently, she stood up, she suggested, "We had better get going. I don't know what time it is, and we need to get Ellie to the

hospital."

They nodded, standing up and followed her out of the gardens. When they reached the entrance, Maggie stopped suddenly and the guys had to put on the breaks, so they wouldn't run into her. Looking around her, they saw why they stopped. It was a girl dressed, in the same outfit that Maggie had arrived in. Spot placed his hand on her shoulder, so that she wouldn't do anything rash.

"What are you doing on these grounds?" The girl asked, pointing her finger at the guys.

"Just move out of the way, please," Spot asked as he led Maggie passed the girl. They walked by and Blink tipped his hat to her, smiling. The girl scowled as they walked by her, and she didn't like that. No guys were allowed on the grounds unless they were parents or brothers. This can't go unreported. Turning, she started running towards the office building.

"How are we going to get the hospital?" Jack asked. He was now carrying Ellie because Maggie's arms were getting tired.

"It's just down the road," she said, pointing in the direction where it was.

She turned the corner, and saw the one person she hated most in the world. Mrs. Mizkens. This time, when she stopped, the guys ran right into her, almost knocking her over. When she was finally upright, she was face to face with Mrs. Mizkens. She had a look that could kill, and Maggie knew if it came to that, her headmistress would do it.

"What are you doing on these grounds? This is private property," Mrs. Mizkens stated.

Smiling, she protested, "We're only walking through. This is the shortest way to the hospital. My daughter needs to get to the doctor."

"I doubt that," Mrs. Mizkens muttered, looking her over. She looked vaguely familiar to her, but she couldn't place it. Shaking her head, she waved them on saying, "Go on. Get your daughter to the hospital."

"Thanks."

They walked around her, and started walking towards the front gate. Before they walked to far, a black car appeared in the gate. It came closer as it came up the drive. Stopping where they were, they watched at the car approached them and stopped in front of them. Once the car stopped, a man opened the door and stepped out. He looked them over, and steered. Shutting the door, he walked away.

Muttering out loud, she commented to Spot, "Seems funny that a man doesn't recognize his own daughter."

"Yes, it does. He should know what his daughter looked like," he

commented.

"Is that right, _Father_?" She asked, stressing the last word.

The man stopped and turned, looking at them. He walked back up to them, and eyed the girl. She looked vaguely familiar to him, but he couldn't figure out why. Looking her in the eye, he said, "For one thing, I do know what my daughter looks like and second, you are _not_ my daughter."

She chuckled and stated, "You wanna bet?"

Tom walked up to his mom and pulled on her sleeve. She looked down at him, and smiled. Kneeling down to him, she asked, "Yeah, what do you need, my little one?"

"Mommy, who's that man?"

"Well, Tom, this man happens to be your grandfather."

"My grandfather? I thought you said he was dead," he asked her.

"He might as well have been," she commented towards her father. "All the good it did me when I was around." She stood up and faced him again.

"What do you mean?" He protested. "I've never seen you before in my life, and this is not my grandson."

"Oh? You want to bet on that?" She repeated her question. Gesturing to herself, she almost ordered, "Look closer at me."

He looked at her and shrugged his shoulders, "So?"

Groaning, she remarked, "You're worse than my kids. How about we try it this way?" She grabbed the rim of her hat and tore it off. A cascade of long reddish brown hair flew down her back. Placing her hands on her hips, she asked, "Well?"

Looking at her again, his eyes grew in amazement, "Margaret?"

She smiled, "Well, he got it right this time."

"What are you doing with the boys?" He asked, grabbing her wrist. Yanking her towards him, he had an angry look on his face. Looking at the headmistress, he barked, "Mrs. Mizkens, why is my daughter with these boys?"

"This is your daughter?! All she said was that she was taking her daughter to the hospital," she protested as she came forward.

"I doubt that's true," he stated to the woman. Looking at his daughter, he ordered, "Tell me where you got those clothes! Those aren't your school clothes."

Yanking her wrist from his hand, she yelled, "For one thing, I am taking my daughter to the hospital." Pointing towards Jack, she continued, "He happened to be holding my daughter, and she has a very bad sickness. And another thing, _father_, you can't tell me what to do. I've been on my own for far too long for you to tell me what to

do." Looking at her family, she suggested, "Come on, everyone. We need to get Ellie to the hospital."

She turned to leave, but he caught her wrist again, and roared, "Oh no you're not. You're only fifteen and you'll do as I tell you."

Laughing, she ripped her wrist from his hand and continued to laugh. Once her laughter had subsided, she said, with a laugh, "Fifteen? Try twenty-three."

"You're delusional. I know darn well that you're fifteen."

"I would be if I had stayed here," she commented, crossing her arms over her chest, taking a stance.

"What do you mean, 'If you had stayed here?'" He asked, looking her in the eyes.

"Well, for the last eight years, I've been living in New York."

"That's not possible," he protested, angrily. "I saw you this weekend, at home."

She smiled again because she knew that he was getting angry with her, and it encouraged her to go on. "Well, I was, but I also, wasn't in 1944."

"Huh?"

"I've been living in 1900 New York. It was 1908 when we came back here," she told him.

"Yeah, right," he remarked, his words dripping with sarcasm.

She sighed, and pulled piece of paper out of her back pocket. Looking at it, she said, "Well, since you don't seem to believe me. Here," handing the paper to him. "You read this. I'd stay and chat, but I have a daughter to attend to."

This time, she turned and left, with her family behind her. He watched her walk out the gate and down the street. Looking down at the paper, she'd given him, he read,

THE WORLD

> April 20, 1908

FIRST FEMALE SUPERVISOR IN THE WORLD

Last week on April, Friday 17, 1908, The World promoted Margaret Conlon as supervisor of Press Central. She has been working there for the last eight years and is very well liked among her coworkers. Her hard work is always noticed and appreciated by everyone. Mr. Martel, head supervisor of Press Central says, "I was a little discouraged when I first hired her, but after seeing her work, I'm glad I made the choice and hired her."

Five years ago, she married her sweetheart, James (Spot) Conlon, leader of the Brooklyn Newsies. To this day, she has three children:

Ellie (4), Callie (5), and Tom (3). She had many friends and family, who congratulate her on her achievement, and so do the people here at The World. I would like to say that I am amazed and gratified by her achievements. It shows that when you put your mind to something, anything is possible.

~Bryan Denton, Senior reporter

His eyes widened when he was done reading the article. He looked up in the direction that his daughter had went. Putting the paper in his pocket, he got in his car, and sped his car out of the drive and through the gate. Looking down the street, he saw them almost to the hospital and he drove that way. Stopping his car in a space, he got out and walked to her. She stopped when he walked up to her and said nothing.

"Margaret, I'm sorry. I didn't know," he apologized.

"If you want to use my given name, please use Maggie. And you would have know if you would have listened," she stated.

"I know, and I'm really sorry."

"Why don't we take this on inside? I have a daughter that needs some care," she suggested as she gestured towards the hospital. He nodded and followed them to the hospital.

Immediately after they entered the door, a doctor and nurse took over from there. The doctor directed them to a set of chairs, where they could wait. They all sat down, except for Maggie. She kept pacing the hallway, since she was too anxious to stay in one place.

"Maggie, will you sit down," Spot begged. "You're not going to help Ellie any by pacing the floors."

Groaning, she sat down in the chair next to him, and laid her head on his shoulder. "I know, Spot. I'm just so worried about her."

"We all know you're worried, we are too. However, it's not going to a lick of good for you to go into an anxiety attack," Spot pointed out as he put his arm around her shoulder.

The time seemed to tick by as they waited to hear something. Spot must have gone to get coffee at least a half dozen times. Finally, the door opened by a tall man with a clipboard in front of his face. He walked into the hall and called out, "Margaret Conlon!"

"Right here," she called, jumping up and running towards him. When she came up to him, he dropped his clipboard and she stopped suddenly. She had a look of complete shock on her face.
"_David!_"

"Have a nice trip?" He asked, with a slight smile on his face, as she hugged him.

"Yeah, but what are you doing here? Why aren't you back in New York?" She questioned him.

"I got transferred her not long after you left. As you know, it wasn't all that surprising when I saw you five years ago, especially

since you told me when you would be arriving in the States," he answered her questions. Looking back at his clipboard, he commented, "Ellie's going to be just fine."

"What's wrong with her? I thought it was the measles," she told him.

"Nope, not the measles. Just a bad mixture of chicken pox and pneumonia."

"Aw, poor kid," Jack commented.

Maggie hugged Spot as she sighed loudly with relief. She had never felt so happy in her life. There is never a more joyous feeling when you find out your child was going to be alright. "So she's going to be alright?" She inquired when she let go of him.

"Yeah, she'll be just fine. I'll give you medicine for the pneumonia, and all you need for the chicken pox is some calamine lotion. That will take away most of the itchiness."

"Ok," she said, nodding her head, as she took the paper. Looking at Spot, she asked, "And where did all this come from?"

"What do you mean?" He asked.

"I know that Ellie's friends had been sick this week, but it was with the measles. Where did she get the chicken pox, and how on earth did she pneumonia?"

Spot started getting a little red under the collar as he stammered for an answer. Finally, he sighed, and started to tell the truth. "I took Ellie to see Mush's family and their youngest daughter, Cathy, had the chicken pox. I didn't know it at the time, and neither did Mush. So I let her play with Cathy while I talked with Mush. When we were walking home, it started rain, and we weren't even halfway home yet. We ended up running most of the way, and we were sopping wet. You weren't home yet, and I tried to get her dried off. Guess I didn't do a very good job at it."

"Why didn't you tell me?"

"I didn't think anything of it. I dried her off and put her in bed, and thought everything was going to be ok," he said quietly.

She hugged him tightly, and reassured him. "It's alright. She's going to get better, and everything's going to be ok."

"I will need you to sign some forms, then you can take her home," David stated.

She nodded, and smiled when Spot suggested, "Why don't I go take care of those forms?"

He followed David, and Jack and Kid Blink to Tom and Callie down the hall to get a drink. Maggie just looked at her father and smiled. "So how's everything with you?"

"Your mother and I worked out our problems, that's why I was at the school. I had come to get you, or at least see if you wanted to come

home," he told her as they sat down in a set of chair.

"If you would have come to get me, I would have ran for my stuff that minute. I do not like it here," she stated with a note of finality.

"I never realized how much you didn't like it here," he contested.

"That's because you never seemed to listen. Every time I tried to tell you about school, you would tell me to come back later, that you were busy. It seemed like you were always busy."

"Look, I'm sorry, I didn't mean it. I just wasn't used to having a child around, much less a teenager. Each time you walked away from me, I wanted to beat myself in the head for the way that I treated you, but I never seemed to have the courage to go after you. From what I read in that paper you gave me, you had a lot of courage.

"I wouldn't say that," she remarked with a blush.

"I will say it. It's very doubtful that I would be able to do something like that. There is no way I could adapt to living in a new country, much less a new time. Everything must have been so much different than home was."

"It was different," she pointed out. "However, I had friends who helped me through it. Spot was my biggest helper."

"And Spot was the one you married?"

She nodded, a little worried. It was then that she realized that she didn't know how her father was going to react to her being married.

"Which one was he?"

"He's the one that went with David."

He nodded, and stated, "I can see why you married him. He cares about you and your children. You made a good choice. That's what your mother always says about me."

"You have that right. Spot is the most loving person I've ever met, well, except for you and mom."

"I've seen the way you two fought. You can't tell me you think that," he protested.

"Oh, I know we get into fights. That's normal, mothers and daughters are supposed to fight at times, but I know she loves me," Maggie pointed out.

They both looked up when the door opened up, and Spot was carrying Ellie. In his hand, he was carrying a small bag, and Maggie assumed that it was Ellie's medicine. Maggie and her father stood up and walked over to him. Spot handed her the bag, so that he could get a better hold on his daughter. Opening the bag, Maggie saw that there were two orange vials and a pink bottle. Closing the bag, she commented, "Well, we had better be going."

As they walked down the hall, her father stopped her and asked, "Where are you going?"

"We're going back home," she replied.

"Wouldn't it be best to stay here until Ellie's better?"

Maggie looked at Spot and then back at her father. Her father decided to make a last ditch effort to have her stay, "Well, at least stay until she's better. That way, if you need more medicine you can get the medicine now."

This made sense to her, but she didn't know what to do. She wanted to get back home, but she didn't want to do it at the expense of her daughter's health. Looking at her husband, she saw him nod slightly, and she knew he had told her to go ahead, if she wanted to. Turning to her father, she stated, "We'll stay until she's better. However, once she's better, we're going to head home. Alright?"

Her father nodded, and looked somewhat relieved. They started walking, and were joined up with Jack and Kid Blink, when they were bringing Tom and Callie back from their drink. Maggie told them what they were doing, and they agreed with the situation. They didn't think it was good to leave now, while Ellie was still sick.

Once all that was taken care of, Maggie's father drove them all to his house. When they arrived home, there was a note on the table from Maggie's mother,

Jerry and Margaret,

Sorry I can't be here when you get back, but I was called to my sister's in an emergency. Mary got hurt, and she's going to need help taking care of her kids. I'll call on Sunday to tell you whether I'll be home or not. Take care.

Mildred

"That'll make it a little easier," Maggie's father remarked under his breath. Folding the paper, he placed it in his pocket and explained to Maggie about her mother. Gesturing upstairs, he told her, "Why don't you have Spot put Ellie in your room."

While Spot and Maggie were upstairs, Maggie's father sent Tom and Callie into the backyards to play, while he talked with Jack and Kid Blink. They were sitting in the living room when he asked, "So how did you all meet my daughter?"

They both looked at each other in surprise. They both wondered if they should tell him the truth. Maggie never told them to keep it a secret from him, and she never said anything about her father. Jack shrugged his shoulders and told her father about how they met her. They told him everything from how she got there through the time that she made the decision to come back.

When the story was finished, he had a better understanding of what his daughter had gone through. He figured that she did everything she could with a difficult situation. Also, after hearing the story, he knew that he couldn't keep her there. He had wanted to do everything

in his power to make her stay, but from her friend's point of view, it seemed best that she go back.

THREE DAYS LATER

"Do we have everything?"

"For the hundredth time, yes we have everything, Maggie. Will you settle down?" Spot contested as he sat down next to her.

They were all leaving now, since Ellie was now better. That morning had been her last doctor's appointment, and David had given her a clean bill of health. Now that she was better, they were going to head back home. Since they had gotten back, Maggie had been getting everything ready. There was so much they had to get together. Over the last three days, Maggie's father had given them the money, so they could get things that they needed.

"Now that everything's ready, we should be going," she suggested.

Her father was standing in the doorway when he heard the suggestion. He was saddened when he heard the suggestion. Also, over the last three days, he and Maggie had gotten a lot closer than they had been, even before she had left for the States. However, he knew that if he ever wanted to see her again, he couldn't keep her there. He had to let her go. "Alright, let's get going."

Everyone grabbed a bag, and they got into the car. When they arrived at the school, they quietly walked to where the portal was. Classes were in session, and they didn't want to disturb anyone. Maggie had to look around the gardens, so she could find the portal. Finally, she found it, and waited for until everyone caught up with her.

When everyone arrived, she turned to her father, almost a little wistful eyed. She knew that their relationship had changed over the last few days, and she appreciated that. Before she had left, there was much to be desired with their relationship. Now she has it the way she always wanted it. Hugging her father, she said, "I'm going to come back. Don't you worry about it."

"I won't. I know that you'll come back when you can, now that you know that way. I just wish there was some way that you could stay."

"You know that my place is no longer here. I learned that while I was gone. For some reason, even when I was living in the States, I never felt that I belonged here. I found where my place was, and I can't leave it. However, that doesn't mean that I can't come back to visit."

He smiled because he knew that she was right. He couldn't keep her away from her friends and family anymore than he was able to understand her when she came back from the States. Sighing, softly, he commented, "Well, I guess you had better be going."

She smiled, and a tear slid down her cheek. Brushing it aside, she hugged her father one last time, then let her children hug him. They too had made a relationship with him over the last three days. They loved their grandfather, and he loved them. Finally, the time came

when they had to leave. Each of them getting a partner, they walked into the portal. Jack and Callie went first, followed by Kid Blink and Tom. Once they were through the portal, Spot picked up Ellie, and he too walked through.

After everyone was through, Maggie started to walk towards the portal, then ran back and hugged her father one more. Tears were streaming down her face, as she headed back to the portal. Waving one last time, she stepped in and disappeared into thin air. Her father stood there as he watched the area that his daughter had gone through.

After she had left, he felt a sudden sense of peace fly through him, and he knew that everything was going to be alright. Smiling, he turned and walked out of the garden, whistling along the way. He knew that everyone was now happy, and Maggie had finally found what she always wants. Her Spot in Time.

End
file.